

The Christian

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News-Letter

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SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, in News-Letter No. 270, we gave an account of the life of Helmuth von Moltke, who with a number of fellow Christians was executed for suspected complicity in the attempt on Hitler's life on July 20th, 1944. As we described in that News-Letter, this remarkable group of men, some Lutherans and some Roman Catholics, had

met at intervals for some time and had begun to form plans of what to do if the Nazi regime were defeated, or if (as they thought inevitably) it collapsed from its own inherent corruption. They foresaw that, whatever happened, Germany would be plunged into something bordering on chaos after defeat, and that many people would be homeless and destitute. They, therefore, thought of plans whereby through the Churches they could organize relief and begin to restore order and self-reliance in the German people.

THE HILFSWERK

Among the members of this group was Eugen Gerstenmaier, who was arrested and held at the headquarters of the Wehrmacht in Berlin. Those who were taken with him were executed on the spot. When it was known that Gerstenmaier was an ordained minister of the Lutheran Church he was held by the Nazis as a witness in trials against the Church which they planned to hold after the war. After this Gerstenmaier was transferred to a concentration camp

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at Bayreuth, where he suffered considerable ill-treatment. In May, 1945, when the American forces came in, a representative of the International Red Cross saw what was apparently his lifeless body lying in the yard, and discovering that he was still alive he asked permission of the military authorities to remove him to Switzerland. Here he recovered, made contact with friends and began to put into effect the schemes about which he and his now dead comrades had so often talked.

In this way the German Hilfswerk was born. What was not foreseen by von Moltke and his friends was the possibility of 14 million refugees pouring into western Germany from Czechoslovakia, Poland and eastern Germany, and the Hilfswerk, which had planned to organize mutual help for Germans on something not much more than a local basis, was faced with the immense task of doing what it could to help this great flood of refugees.

The Hilfswerk now has 1,000 full-time workers all over Germany. Its headquarters are at Stuttgart, and there are branch offices in the zones. It operates freely over all four zones of Germany. In proportion to the volume of its work the paid officers are a very small body and the main work is done in local units in the parishes where voluntary helpers carry the main responsibility. The Hilfswerk has transport offices for bringing in materials to Germany at Bremen, Lübeck and Singen on the Swiss border.

In the first eight months after the ending of the war 20,000 tons of food, one million pieces of clothing and 35 million marks were collected *from the German people themselves* to help their suffering countrymen. In 1945 there was a great harvest collection for the Russian zone. Between April and December, 1946, another 30 million marks were collected in the three western zones; 12 million of this was sent to the Church in the Russian zone for help there. The slogan adopted by the Hilfswerk and publicized in all the parishes was "Many have sacrificed all: *you* ought to sacrifice something."

But the Hilfswerk has not been concerned solely in the giving of charity. Those who have organized this work have fully and keenly realized that charity is not a permanent basis on which society can continue. It has therefore struggled, in the face of very great difficulties, both economic and political, to get raw materials and to set German people at work on them. For example, a gift of wood pulp from Sweden was made into 500,000 hymn books, and work for 450 people for a year was found as a result of a gift of raw material to make Bibles. In Switzerland, 25,000 Swiss francs were given for bed linen for hospitals and orphanages under the care of the Hilfswerk. This would have purchased in Switzerland 400 or 500 sets of sheets, but the money was used instead to purchase 7 tons of cotton which were made up in Germany into 4,000 sets. Similarly, a gift of a ton of cotton yarn was made into 3,000 children's outfits, and 2½ tons of wool into 1,000 coats and trousers. The general import of raw materials into Germany by private bodies is under the strict control of the four Powers and the concession given to the Hilfswerk has been of immense moral value in providing work.

The Hilfswerk has organized extensive help for children, of whom there are many thousands in Germany without parents or other relatives. Under its general supervision there are ninety-two children's homes, and it has four homes for tubercular children in Bavaria. The Hilfswerk has been able to make use of some of the organizational machinery and the buildings belonging to the famous German *Inner Mission*. It has also been organizing camps for boys and girls, to get them away from the dingy circumstances of life in bombed cities. For example, in the province of Hesse alone, last summer 1,000 boys and 500 girls were in camp, and more camps have already been held and are being planned this year.

The Hilfswerk is the main agency for receiving and distributing the parcels sent from this country through Save Europe Now. It works in close co-operation and amity with the Roman Catholic *Caritas* and with the relief organiza-

tion of the Trade Unions. Those who are associated with the Hilfswerk consider that it is not altogether good that those few people who have personal contacts with the outside world should be the chief recipients of parcels of food and clothing, and all that they receive is distributed strictly on a basis of priority of need. But for this food coming in from outside, it would be impossible for the Hilfswerk to do some of its most useful and constructive work, namely, the holding of camps for boys and girls, students and members of youth organizations. No young German could derive any profit from a course of study or a conference which did not provide some extra food. The physical condition among students, for example, can be illustrated from Tübingen, where there is a large group of theological students ; 28 per cent of them are suffering from tuberculosis ; many of them do not possess a single book ; some do not even possess a Bible.

Because it has a network of organization covering all four zones and including, for example, permission to use long distance telephones, the Hilfswerk is able to carry on work which would otherwise be at a standstill. All over Germany many thousands of parents are asking for their children to have Christian education in the schools. But this is impossible until there are teachers available. Already the Hilfswerk has begun three months' courses in Christian education for teachers, 200 of which are being held in different centres, with a total enrolment of 10,000 teachers and students.

The problem of what is to be done with the great mass of refugees is still not solved. We hear almost nothing of them in this country now, and it is well for us to be reminded of their existence. On the barren island of Sylt, off the coast of Schleswig-Holstein, 10,000 refugees live in eleven camps on islands of sandy dunes where nothing will grow. These islands used to be popular with holiday makers in the heat of summer. There are a few hotels, none of which has any means of heating. Here, in Nissen huts, these people endured the rigours of last winter. Forty per cent of them are tubercular ; eighty per cent are under-nourished, and this 10,000

represents only $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of Schleswig-Holstein's total of refugees. At Hochstrasse, Harburg, there is a camp for the disabled ; men without legs and arms lie helplessly in tin huts from which in winter the water drips and freezes. Their condition is terrible ; and there in their midst is an Anglican Franciscan, sharing their life and ministering as best he can to their needs. Both these camps, which are only examples of many hundreds, receive help from the Hilfswerk.

There is great need for a full and documented account of this great upsurge of Christian love and pity combined with the German genius for organization, to be published in this country. It might be a salutary rebuke to any Christians here who excuse themselves from the service of the Kingdom on grounds of post-war tiredness !

PETITIONARY PRAYER

The Supplement which we published in the last number of the News-Letter was preceded by a long correspondence about prayer between a number of people in which the News-Letter played the part of a clearing house. The letters written were not intended for publication, but parts of two of them, written at a late stage, when the Supplement had been drafted, may interest our readers, especially if they share the opinion of one who recently wrote that he " wished we talked about God more in the News-Letter ".

The first letter came from a commentator on the Supplement : the second is part of Professor Hodges' reply.

"I am sure that Hodges is right in his emphasis on the analogy from human parenthood. Anyone with sense will be able to see where that analogy breaks down. Nearly all the dangers lie in our being intimidated by thoughts of divine omnipotence into holding a less than personal conception of God. When I am aware of an illumination about God's character, it is nearly always that I realize myself to have been thinking of Him in terms less than human. Insight comes when I see Him as more understanding, more patient and kind than I had believed possible, or when I realize that just as there are fine and tender nuances in the relationships between people which a wrong thought or a wrong response or a

careless word can blight, so it is in our relationship to God. Do you remember Citizen Kane's remark to his wife, 'You can't do that to me!' But that was far too gross an instance!

"I feel that lots of people are under the illusion that everything that happens is God's will. It is of course in a sense, since He permits it, but to assert that it is unconditionally so is to go into sheer determinism. It is a wrong conception of this kind that makes them afraid of definite petition. They must be told that God has of set purpose left an area where by co-operation we can help Him to set right things that are not His will. I will not be bullied here by the word 'Pelagianism'. 'Fellow-workers with God' is a Bible phrase.

"There is another small point. Those people who are doubtful about definite petition, 'young adults' in the religious life, who are mentioned at the end, should, I think, be dealt with a little more stringently. They are, in fact, people who know more about God than Christ does, who tells his followers that they must make definite requests. They are people who hesitate, usually dominated by philosophical inhibitions, though sometimes it is a right resentment against other people who think themselves God's blue-eyed boys. Hence the importance of the proviso 'If it be thy will' and the recollection of what happens in a sensible family when two children have conflicting wishes. When wishing very much for something, I have found it a help to reflect that God has a plan for me and a plan for the persons who may be in competition with me, and that to get anything else but what He wills for us would lead in the end to real dust and ashes."

Professor Hodges replied to this:

"Petitionary prayer is a using of God for our own ends. One of the things we need to remember about God is His eagerness to be used. It is of course customary for preachers to deny this. There is a stock sermon on prayer which I have heard all too often, which says that the real purpose of petition is 'not to bring God's will into line with ours, but to bring ours into line with His'. This, in the form often given to it, implies that the petitionary form is a grammatical swindle, and that we ought really to be meditating on renunciation. In reality, of course, no one asks for things unless he desires them and hopes to obtain his desires. That is the meaning and function of petition, and when we are bidden to ask, that is what we are bidden to do. The preacher's impulse to hedge

about it is due, of course, to a clear consciousness that the mass of people will in fact ask for the wrong things ; but then the proper way to deal with that is to tell them the conditions that are attached to prayer. The attempt to deny the nature of petition as such cannot logically be defended unless on the assumption that our desires *never* accord with the will of God, which is the extreme doctrine of total depravity : God's will *or* my own, God's purposes *or* mine, as if it were always an exclusive antithesis.

"C.'s points are philosophical as much as theological and there is room for difference of opinion about them. I don't share his particular bogies ; and if he refuses to be bullied by the word 'Pelagianism', I shall refuse to be bullied by the word 'determinism'. At bottom he and I are moved by opposite concerns. He is anxious to show that there is no need to be tied too closely by scientific determinism, and that Christian beliefs which conflict with it may quite reasonably be held. I on the other hand am anxious to show that there is no need to try to escape from scientific determinism for the sake of believing in prayer-fulfilments, because such fulfilments can quite reasonably be conceived in a way which does not conflict with it. We may both be right, because the question under discussion is not *how things actually happen*, but *how they may reasonably be taken to happen*. Neither C. nor I nor any man living knows the truth of these matters. What we can and must discuss is whether belief A and belief B are compatible, and, if not, which deserves to have precedence in a reasonable mind. Like all philosophical questions, it is a question of mental hygiene, and so there can quite well be alternative answers to it."

How much time nowadays do Christians spend in writing to each other about the Faith ? Among the almost forgotten aspects of the Christian Church is the fact that it provides a universe of discourse within which discussion, argument and mutual improvement in wisdom can go on. Does it still go on ?

Kathleen Bliss

THE REVIVAL OF CHRISTIAN CONSERVATISM

ONE of the most interesting and unexpected features of the present political situation is the way in which spokesmen of the leading political parties are asserting that they own their particular party allegiance because their Christian faith has led them to it. What is more, they are saying it in such a way as to make clear that it is no mere desire to catch votes or to gain prestige which prompts them. From the Socialist side there has recently appeared in the press an influentially signed statement in relation to the present crisis brought out by members of Parliament who support the Socialist Christian League. Two carefully-argued books, written from a definitely Christian point of view, *The Defence of Man* by Elliott Dodds and *Religion, Personality and Politics* by B. D. Copland, have just appeared as official Liberal Party publications.¹ But it is from the Conservative side that the volume of evidence of this kind is impressive. Not only are there the statements of Mr. Churchill, Mr. Eden and Mr. Quintin Hogg, which have already been commented upon in C.N.-L. No. 281. Many other leading Conservatives have made similar statements. A recent pamphlet written by Mr. David Clarke for the Conservative Political Centre on *The Conservative Faith in the Modern Age*² opens with a long and careful account of the relation between Christianity and Conservatism. There are active Christian Conservative groups in some of the universities. And what all these say is not merely what Conservatism has always said, that their party supports and protects the Church, but that their approach to politics flows from a Christian analysis of human nature and a Christian attitude towards life.

THE PENDULUM OF POLITICS

All this gives added interest to a book, published last year and recently reprinted, called *The Pendulum of Politics*, which was written by Mr. Aubrey Jones, a young Conservative candidate at the last election. Mr. Jones was the son of a Welsh mining

¹ Herbert Joseph, 6s. each.

² The Conservative Political Centre, Victoria Street, S.W. 1, 1s.

worker and obtained a scholarship in the early thirties to the London School of Economics, where he took the conventional line of becoming an "enlightened progressive" of the school of Laski, agnostic in religion and pink in politics. Largely as a result of his experience in Germany before the war, where his work as a journalist led him, he returned to the Christian faith in which he was brought up. It was this, he maintains, which led him to revise his political views, making him espouse not merely the Conservative party but a version of historic Toryism.

This background means that although this book is the fullest statement which has recently appeared of a Christian Conservative position it is far from being representative. It is much less "progressive" in outlook than most younger Christian Conservatives feel that they should be and, as the work of a recent convert, it is much less critical of Conservative history than they generally are. At the same time, the fact that it is some of the more unpopular elements in the Conservative outlook to which Mr. Jones believes his rediscovery of the Christian faith has led him, makes his book in some ways a better illustration of both the strength and the dangers of a Christian Conservative position than many more balanced and mature statements.

The book begins in autobiographical vein, describing how the author discovered his own "Progressivism" to be founded upon an illusion. Progressivism he defines as the belief that the world is inevitably evolving in a certain beneficial direction, and that it is our duty to welcome this evolution rather than to strive vainly to hinder it. Both Liberalism and Communism share this belief, Liberalism holding that mankind is moving along a straight line and becoming steadily better, Communism that it is advancing in mounting spirals and that it is on the verge of the final revolution which will produce the millenium. As against both these he has become converted to what he asserts is the Conservative view of the matter, that mankind merely trudges round and round the same spot. He will admit that a relatively progressivist spirit which prompts men to criticize institutions which are being abused is healthy, but anything which tends to undermine lawfully-constituted authority is dangerous. The problem of politics is to achieve an equilibrium between this criticism and loyalty to established institutions. He believes that

the pendulum of politics has swung too far on the side of criticism and must now return to the other side.

The first and most momentous matter upon which true authority has been undermined is that of religion. Because the authority of God has not been understood or accepted men have fallen victim to the illusion that the good is only a set of expedients worked out by men for the sake of living amicably together. This in turn has led to the belief that anything which is expedient from the point of view of one's own ideology is the good.

When he turns to consider the position of the Labour Party in relation to this, he acknowledges that the origins of the Labour Party were far from being exclusively Marxist, especially on its Trade Union side, but he insists that the only intellectual basis which the Labour Party can find is Marxism, a false secular religion. Christian Socialists are apparently deceiving themselves. Liberalism, so far from being a positive position in its own right, merely serves to prepare the way for Communist dictatorship by undermining the authority of law and established institutions and encouraging men to look for a secular Utopia. He illustrates this statement, which on the face of it sounds like the kind of argument which might have been used by a particularly dyed-in-the-wool Tory against the Reform Bill of 1832, by a curiously unconvincing attempt to show how the reaction against monarchy in Europe has led to the establishment not of democracy, but of dictatorship. This statement is made more intelligible, however, when we realize that Mr. Jones has his own definition of these different political attitudes. "To attack the abuses that develop in every institution with no thought beyond that, this the hallmark of the Liberal. To smash the institution that has shown the abuses, this the hallmark of a person standing more to the Left than the Liberal, of the Socialist or the Communist, who generally appears at a later stage than the Liberal and who carries the Liberal cry for reform to lengths the Liberal never dreamed of. To remedy abuses while exerting might and main to keep the institution intact lest, once destroyed, it be forced to recreate itself with worse defects, this is the hallmark of the Conservative."

From this Mr. Jones passes on to what is one of the most interesting sections of his book, a defence of a class system. He

asserts than an élite is necessary for an effectively functioning society and any attempt to abolish it is vain because it inevitably comes back in another form. What is important is not that class distinctions should be abolished, which is impossible, but that class distinctions should not be too rigid. There should be easy access from one class to another and there should be numerous classes in the community which shade imperceptibly into one another. The trouble with attempts to establish a classless society is that they succeed only in making a violent class distinction between those who exercise the power and obtain the privileges of Government and the defenceless multitudes whom they govern. He makes the very shrewd point that the bourgeoisie are not, as Marx says, the enemies of the proletariat, but its protectors, because without a strong middle class the common people are at the mercy of their governors.

In the light of this analysis of class, Mr. Jones turns upon those who are equipped to exercise the function of an élite in modern England and denounces them sharply. So far are they from doing their duty that they either take the lead in expressing an attitude of irresponsible scepticism which undermines proper authority and thus makes the danger of authoritarianism greater, or else they contentedly enjoy the privileges of responsibility while light-heartedly ignoring its obligations.

From this Mr. Jones passes on to put very forcefully the familiar Conservative point of view on public ownership. Public ownership means not that the individual has control over the property which has become socialized but that the majority, or more precisely their officers, now have control over him. The phase "democratic socialism" is a contradiction in terms. It attempts to unite Parliamentary control of the Government with Government ownership of a large part of the nation's wealth without realizing that the very fact of Government ownership makes effective Parliamentary control impossible. Parliamentary democracy rests on a balance of forces and if decisive economic power is placed in the hands of the Government Parliamentary democracy is doomed. Bureaucrats perform the same necessary functions as the old capitalists did, but with greater harshness and arbitrariness and with less appeal to law and public opinion against their decisions.

After defending right-wing Conservative foreign policy Mr. Jones turns in conclusion to prophecy. Disappointed Socialism will inevitably turn to Communism because the Socialist dream has encouraged expectations which cannot be assuaged, so that men will be driven to violent methods in the attempt to fulfil them. The British Labour Party is in a self-contradictory position. All that Mr. Churchill said about Socialism involving totalitarianism is apparently the literal truth. Our only hope is the moderate Conservative one of doing the best we can in an evil world and not expecting too much from it. Our beautiful dreams of world brotherhood and internationalism without tears are the product of a sentimentality which is the afterglow of a declining Christian faith which has lost its moral backbone and refuses to face the facts of human experience. Conservatism today is in decline because Christianity is in decline. There can be no hope for the world until both revive.

IS IT CHRISTIANITY ?

It would be inappropriate for a theologian to discuss whether all the political points which Mr. Jones makes against Socialism and Liberalism are valid. But his claim that a Christian interpretation of human nature leads to the kind of Conservative attitude in politics which he represents demands to be met.

It has to be granted to Mr. Jones that he has given us some good reasons to justify his claim. A great deal of Liberal and Socialist teaching, and all Marxism, does presuppose a secular utopianism which is contrary to Christian belief about man's nature and destiny. Even where it is not explicitly asserted, the tendency of the political doctrine of the Left is to assume that a perfect society can be achieved simply by a re-arrangement of human resources in relation to nature and that that perfect society is primarily to be conceived of in terms of material benefits. It is also true that the sentimental humanitarianism which disregards justice which we witnessed on a large scale between the wars is the first fruit of a decline in faith, and it does help to create the conditions in which moral relativism and a contempt for Law flourish. If the teaching of those on the Left encourage such attitudes, and there is indisputable evidence to show that it frequently does, then it has to be agreed that, to that extent, it is un-Christian teaching.

Fair-minded Socialists cannot say that any adequate intellectual justification of Socialism has yet been made which effectively rebuts these charges. Liberals may reasonably assert that they are on stronger ground here. There have been, and there are, many Christian Socialists. At least eighty of them, we understand, are to be found in the present House of Commons, and the whole country was edified to hear of the impressive turn-out of Cabinet Ministers at Church Parade on the Sunday morning at the Margate Conference. But it is the case that they have not been very definite in making clear the reasons why their Christian faith leads them to Socialism. This is partly because they have either been Trade Unionists of sound instincts but few theories, or passionate idealists with a greater gift for prophetic generalization than for precise statement. The main intellectual case for Socialism even in this country, and this is much more true abroad, has been put by Marxists and by Scientific Humanists of the Laski type, "men who ain't got no backs to their heads" in the immortal phrase of the late Will Crooks. Mr. Jones is over-simple in his treatment of Marxism—he had not then read his Niebuhr—but against the Scientific Humanists, who are still the main *intellectual* spokesmen for Socialism in this country, much of his argument holds.

Apart from any other consideration, this fact is enough to make those Christian Socialists pause who say boldly that the only possible political position for a Christian to take up is a Socialist one. If it is true it is by no means self-evident and it needs much more careful justification than it has yet been given. The more technical objections brought by Mr. Jones against Socialism make the reason for Christian caution on this matter even weightier. In particular, the point that Parliamentary control of economic power makes democratic control of Government virtually impossible has frequently been made, but it has not yet been answered by Socialists with a thoroughness and integrity which inspires confidence that they do genuinely see this as a serious problem.

But when all this is granted, it is very far from an acceptance of Mr. Jones' main thesis. He has shown that a Conservative position is a tenable one for a Christian man to hold. In fact, he could have made his case even stronger in one or two direc-

tions. But that is not the same thing as proving that it is impossible for a man to hold a different position in politics which is compatible with his Christian faith. Mr. Jones can only give plausibility to his argument that this is so by radically misrepresenting both Liberalism and Socialism.

A HIGHLY SELECTIVE ACCOUNT OF SOCIALISM

It is against Socialism that Mr. Jones directs his sharpest attacks and, therefore, it is his misrepresentation of Socialism that we can perhaps most profitably consider, especially as it may be possible to discuss the present position of political Liberalism in a later News-Letter. For all practical purposes, he identifies Socialism with the viewpoint of his tutor, Mr. Laski. He is probably unfair even to Mr. Laski, but he is still more unfair to Socialism as a whole. He does not begin to grapple with the fact that the Socialist movement in this country has arisen primarily as a protest against the misery, frustration and injustice perpetrated by men against each other. He does not discuss the economic criticisms which both Socialism and Marxism make of Capitalism, which may be valid even though their own constructive proposals for remedying its errors may be equally fallacious. To say that Conservatives cannot be blamed for the evils of an unplanned economic system because historic Toryism was always suspicious of industrialization is mere academic frivolity in a discussion of political realities in the post-Baldwin and Chamberlain era. The Conservative Party is inevitably the party of Big Business in modern society, and it would be a very bad and unrepresentative Conservative Party if it were not. He does not begin to do justice to the genuine desire to achieve a more harmonious and closely-knit social life where men can serve each other without servility which has inspired the Socialist movement in its formative period and which we badly need to-day. It is as unfair to class all Socialists as envious grumblers and trouble-makers as it is to class all Conservatives as bloated, self-righteous plutocrats. Above all, he does not allow for the fact that a Conservative viewpoint lends itself very easily to corruption, and that society needs those who will fight against illegitimate privilege, class snobbery, false imperialism and reckless war-mongering as much as it needs those who will loyally support

established institutions. To say that those who take that side must logically be Marxists and unbelievers is both to fly in the face of the facts and to strike a blow at one of the most glorious of established English institutions, the party system.

It needs particularly to be emphasized in these days that even the so-called utopianism of Socialism is not all false. British Socialist idealism is a confused amalgam of secular utopianism and the legitimate Christian vision of a godly commonwealth where free and responsible men live together as a real family. That vision needs the corrective of the Conservative reminder that it is in a fallen sinful world that we must be faithful to it. But in itself it is not wrong and Conservatism, whether religious or political, needs to be supplemented by it as much as it needs to be supplemented by Conservatism. Mr. Jones says that he has returned to the faith of his fathers. But the conclusions he derives from it suggest that he has discovered the faith of the Conservative English upper classes, one which is more real and worthy of respect than it is often given credit for, rather than returned to the prophetic radicalism of his Welsh Nonconformist origins, which can claim an equally respectable Christian history.

Conservatives may retort to this that it is the secular rather than the Christian strain in Socialism which is likely to be more powerful in an irreligious time like the present. The point is well taken, as high-minded Socialist legislators are discovering to-day when so many people seem to expect bread and circuses from them rather than an opportunity to give themselves freely in a common enterprise for the common good. Yet it is highly questionable whether the way out from this is simply to retreat from Socialism. In one sense that is impossible. The nature of complex modern industrialized society is such that it cannot be made to serve human welfare except by a much franker recognition, in economic as well as in political terms, of our dependence upon and responsibility to one another. The Industrial Charter recently published by the Conservative Party itself recognizes this. Radical social changes are taking place and will continue to take place, and to try to stop them is vain. We may well believe that it is vitally important that men of conservative temper should have a considerable voice in the affairs of state while such

changes are taking place, but it is difficult to maintain that it is Conservatism alone that we need to-day, especially if Conservatism is to be equated with Mr. Jones' version of it. Christian men must offer an interpretation of Socialism which meets the objections to be made against it from a Christian point of view and which genuinely tries to deal with the real problems facing society to-day, instead of fighting the ghosts of the enemies of social justice of a generation ago.

This becomes the more important when we remember what was said in C.N.-L. 281 about the fact that political parties do not merely represent bodies of ideas but particular interests in the community. A Tory philosophy towards politics may be distinguished but cannot be dissociated from the body of people who make up the Conservative party and the same holds of Socialism and the Labour party. The fact that this is so is the reverse of a weakness if it is frankly recognized and prevents men from being too doctrinaire or self-righteous in their party loyalty. No party should be so foolish as to claim that under the political system obtaining at present in this country it represents unequivocally the Christian attitude to politics, even though it should always strive to justify the claim that it is an approach to politics which it is perfectly proper for a Christian man to have in particular circumstances. What is important is that each political interest should be represented by Christian men, who are vigilant to guard against the temptations to which those interests are exposed and who endeavour to bring out the best in their contribution to the well-being of the state. Mr. Jones' book, despite its serious defects, is to be welcomed as one attempt to do that from the Conservative side. Its service to the future of British politics will be even greater if it succeeds in provoking a detailed rejoinder from the Christian Socialist side.

D. J.

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